FOREST SERVICE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

THE FOREST SERVICE

History Line

To: History Coordinators
Forest Service Personnel

1680
Spring 1985

GREY TOWERS, THE PINCHOT FAMILY MANSION at Milford, PA, is on the National Register of Historic Places, a list maintained by the Department of the Interior. It was the home of Gifford Pinchot, first chief of the Forest Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, for most of his life. It is now maintained by the Forest Service as the headquarters of the Pinchot Institute for Conservation Studies. It also serves as a place for Forest Service seminars and meetings.

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EXPERIMENT STATION

Washington Office History Projects

A History of the Civilian Conservation Corps and the Forest Service by William Honey et al. Undergoing final editing. Publication late 1985.

A History of Range Management in the Forest Service by William Rowley. To be published by Texas A&M University Press in September 1965.

A History of State and Private Cooperative Forestry in the Forest Service by William Robbins. To be published by University of Nebraska Press in September 1985.

A History of the Intermountain Region of the Forest Service by Thomas Alexander. Publication planned in 1986.

A History of the Pacific Southwest Region of the Forest Service by Lee Pendergrass. Publication planned in 1986.

A History of the Southwestern Region of the Forest Service by Intaglio, Inc. headed by Prof. Henry Dethloff of Texas A&M history department. Publication planned in 1987.

History Activities in the Field

NORTHERN REGION

A cultural resources overview of the Lolo and Bitterroot National Forests is being compliled by Milo McLeod, archeologist for the Lolo.

Barbara Beck is now in a permanent archeologist position on the Deerlodge National Forest.

A videotape of river logging along the Clearwater River in northern Idaho was recently made by the region. It is being made available to interested viewers.

Two new books on western Montana have been published by Montana magazine. One is Montana's Bob Marshall Country by Reick Graetz, available for $9.95. The other is Beartooth Country by Bob Anderson, which describes the Absaroka and Beartooth Mountains, covering geology, animals, plants and the past history of the area, with over 300 color photos. Both were prepared with the assistance of the Northern Region Information Office and national forests. Beartooth Country sells for $12. The address is Montana magazine, Box 5630, Helena, Mont. 59604.

Another new book is Stanley Cohen's A Pictorial History of Downhill Skiing, in 256 pages and over 500 photos, 12 pages in color. It sells for $14.95 plus $1.50 postage, from Pictorial Histories Publishing Company, 713 S. Third West, Missoula Mont. 59801.

The Nez Perce National Forest has received an award from the Idaho Historic Preservation Council for work stabilizing and rehabilitating structures at the Jim Moore Ranch in the Frank Church-River of No Return Wilderness.

Historical artifacts are being sought to improve the displays at Lochsa Historical Ranger Station, along the Lewis & Clark Highway in the Clearwater National Forest in Idaho. The old station represents early-day life at a backcountry ranger station.

History Activities in the Field

The station was accessible only by trail from the early 1920's until U.S. Highway 12 penetrated the Lochsa River canyon in the late 1950's. It was restored and opened to the public in 1976. National Forest volunteers serve as hosts at the station from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily, Memorial Day through Labor day.

Displays being sought include whipsaw, foot adze, horse logging equipment, horse harness, dynamite boxes, Osborne fire finder, Kimmel stove, lookout cookstove, nail kegs, wooden barrels, crocks, kerosene lamps and lanterns, scythe, FS porcelain pitchers, cups and plates, 1920-30 calendars, old maps, hand crank telephones, and old photographs.

Anyone with items to donate may contact Mel Fowlekes, Lochsa Ranger Station, Kooskia, ID 83539. (208-926-4275).

Earl E. Cooley, a pioneer Forest Service smokejumper, has written a history of smokejumpers entitled Trimotor and Trail, covering events since his first jump, July 12, 1940. Copies are available at $14.95 each from Cooley at 1622 South Ave., West, Missoula, Mont. (406-549-9933).

SOUTHWESTERN REGION

The Flim Flam: A Geographic and Historic Survey, by Christine Beard of Northern Arizona University, has just been published by the Coconino National Forest. The Flim Flam was a railroad first built by the Arizona Lumber Company. The study was undertaken to examine the feasibility of using the old railroad bed as a hiking trail. The author enthusiastically recommends that this be done. The railroad is easily traced.

PACIFIC SOUTHWEST REGION

An inventory of lookout towers in California is being taken by Mark Thornton, Forest Service volunteer. He is noting their age, condition and relative importance both as historic properties and as part of the fire detection network. He has visited over 240 towers, of which 153 are part of the Forest Service system. Mark is also collecting stories of lookout operators, including their feelings about their work, and current trends in fire detection. Lookout towers are rapidly declining in importance, superseded by aerial reconnaissance. Half of the present towers will be out of use within 10 years, Thornton believes.

Donald S. Miller, Historic Preservation Officer for the Pacific Southwest Region, has been elected to the steering committee and the executive board of the California Committee for the Promotion of History. He is the first archeologist to be so honored. The executive board is a group of five professionals who propose and write policy for the organization.

Robert Cermak, retired Deputy Regional Forester, is working on a master's degree in history at Chico State University. He is doing research for a thesis on the History of Fire Control in the California National Forests, 1905-55. He is interested in reminiscences of retirees. His address is 51 Redbird Court, Oroville, CA 95965.

Al Groncki has agreed to finish the History of the Klamath National Forest which Russell Bower started and nearly completed.

(Continued on page 7)

A New Look at Gifford Pinchot

(Brief Summary of a Talk at Grey Towers by Dennis M. Roth, Head, History Section)

America's public land laws did not provide for the logging industry. By the end of the Civil War the industry had grown and large corporations were formed. But there was no way to obtain land or timber except by fraud or theft. Companies acquired land through laws written to promote family farms. In the northern Great Lakes States, large fires burned regularly through the heavy debris left by wasteful logging. Poor, sandy soils made farming the cutover land impractical in most cases.

The Civil War resulted in a growth of nationalistic feeling which over the next four decades gradually made the public especially in the East more receptive to proposals for the management of natural resources by the Federal government. These proposals became frequent as the wastelands created in the Lake States became well known. It seemed impossible to observers of the era that vigorous forests would ever reclaim such lands. As the lumber industry began to move into the Far West in the 1880's and 1890's there were fears that these scenes would be repeated there.

In 1886 Bernhard E. Fernow, a German forester, became Chief of the Division of Forestry in the Department of Agriculture, America's first professonal forester. He began forestry research and cooperative work. He helped to promote the 1891 act which allowed the President to create forest reserves, and the 1897 act which provided for management of the reserves. The acts were also made possible by support from western irrigation farmers and city dwellers, who were worried that their watersheds might be damaged by unrestricted timber harvesting and livestock grazing.

When Gifford Pinchot took over the Division of Forestry from Fernow in 1898, his goal was to gain control of the reserves by having them transferred to the Department of Agriculture from the Department of the Interior. He succeeded in 1905, when Congress agreed to the shift, thus creating the present Forest Service. There was a stalemate in the West. Cattlemen did not want sheepmen on forest ranges, and irrigation farmers and city dwellers wanted to exclude both as well as loggers. Pinchot believed it necessary to provide for all users.

Pinchot was oriented towards national resource users; he defined conservation as wise use. Some, like John Muir, were oriented towards preservation of the wilderness. Both positions have value. But if Muir and his followers had prevailed at the turn of the century, I believe that they might have been able to get a few national parks, but the total amount of forest land under Federal management would have been much smaller than it is today. That is because westerners and business corporations would have been so aroused that they would have prevented the creation of the National Forest System as we know it today. This means that there would have not been the land base from which to create the current Wilderness System. Pinchot may have not foreseen the creation of wilderness in the National Forests, but his work made them possible.

A New Look at Gifford Pinchot

I believe that if Gifford Pinchot were alive today he would support the Wilderness System. As a highly intelligent man, he would quickly see the need for the system under modern conditions, and as a very astute politician he would recognize its political inevitability.

In a 1978 issue of Environmental Law, James L. Huffman summarized this argument well. "... But Pinchot must be considered in his own historical context. His was a time of very different social needs. Wilderness recreation was truly then, as many mistakenly argue it is today, available only to an elite class who could afford it. A trip to Yellowstone National Park in 1890 was not unlike an African safari or a trek in Nepal today. In 1890 society needed resources for building homes and powering machines, and the primary source of those resources was the forest. Pinchot's plea was for the economically and environmentally wise use of the forest. His concern was precisely that of today's environmentalist. That his approach and solutions were different only reflects that ecology was an even less understood science in Pinchot's time than it is today."

I think Pinchot still has much to say to us today, but in order to hear that message we have to sensitively translate it to fit the conditions of our era. I think we can be grateful that there was both a John Muir and a Gifford Pinchot, as well as their predecessors, Henry David Thoreau, George P. Marsh, Bernhard Fernow, Franklin Hough, and many others.

FOREST PRODUCTS LAB CELEBRATES 75 YEARS

In 1910 the U.S. Forest Products Laboratory (FPL) in Madison, Wisconsin, was dedicated to a concept of "wise use" of wood, a concept that more rational and economical use of forest products is vital to the prosperity of the Nation and to forest conservation.

The research accomplishments of the FPL include these: development of the semichemical pulping process now used to produce corrugating medium used in virtually all corrugated containers and packaging; construction and demonstration of first all-wood prefabricated house; first testing of large scale glued-laminated wooden arches in the United States; development and testing of all-weather wood adhesives, specifications and improved production techniques for softwood plywood; and research and testing of waferboard and particleboard concepts now used in a variety of products. Results of such research have been used to find economical uses for vast quantities of underutilized or formerly wasted wood resource, and to conserve billions of board feet of timber.

On June 3, the Forest Products Laboratory will celebrate 75 years of wood products research and will welcome many distinguished visitors and the general public to an open house of the Laboratory. On Tuesday, June 4, an afternoon general assembly, at the University of Wisconsin Memorial Union, will feature four speakers addressing resource use and management. The activities will conclude on Tuesday evening with a reception and banquet for employees, retirees, and invited guests.

History Activities in the Field

Jim Blakley has contracted with the Los Padres National Forest to write a historical overview for the Forest Plan.

A "Historical Overview of the Eldorado National Forest" was prepared in 1983 by Dana E. Supernowicz as a master's thesis.

A cultural resource overview, "History of the Tahoe National Forest, 1840-1940," was produced in 1982 by W. Turrentine Jackson.

PACIFIC NORTHWEST REGION

Two oral history tape-recorded interviews with former regional foresters have been made by the region. They are with Ted Schlapfer and Dick Worthington. They are now being transcribed.

The region is nominating to the National Register of Historic Places about 550 ranger stations and guard stations built by the Civilian Conservation Corps about 50 years ago. They are being submitted as a theme group. They were made in a distinctive rustic style unique to the region. They differ noticeably from similar structures in the Northern, Intermountain, and Pacific Southwest Regions, and from those of other land management agencies.

FOREST SERVICE IN PACIFIC NORTHWEST

The USDA Forest Service in the Pacific Northwest: Major Political Controversies and Societal Problems, 1891-1945 is the title of a paper given by Gerald W. Williams, sociologist and social historian on the Umpqua and Willamette National Forests, at the annual Pacific Northwest Historians Guild meeting in Seattle, March 1-2, 1985.

The following topics were covered: Establishment of the forest reserves, forest reserve land frauds, the Forest Homestead Act of 1906 which allowed farms to be formed within the reserves, cancellation of a new forest reserve in Washington after objections, cancellation of the Oregon and California Railroad Land Grant in Oregon, the struggle between the Agriculture and Interior Departments for the timberlands in the O&C Grant, release of timber companies from cutting contracts because of the Great Depression, creation of the Civilian Conservation Corps which transformed the forests of the region, Harold Ickes' attempts to transfer the Forest Service to the Interior Department, controversy over the creation of Olympic National Park in 1938, and others.

SOUTHERN REGION

The Region's 50th birthday was celebrated in July with Open House, unit exhibits, a family meeting, and a historical slide-tape show. Retirees were special guests. Six oral history interviews have been added to the regional collection. The region is assisting in a 60-year Timber Study of the South. New employees receive a history of Region 8 in their orientations. Field units maintain annual historical summaries. A team of Forest Service and Soil Conservation Service retirees have produced a draft history of the Yazoo-Little Tallahatchee Flood Prevention Project.

Chattahoochee National Forest is updating its history for its 50th anniversary. It also reviewed the inventory of records at East Point Federal Records Center for

History Activities in the Field

retrieval, and prepared and filed newspaper clippings from the 1940's and 1950's. It collected a cubic foot of historical records during the year. The Forest obtained an 1835-1924 Cherokee Indian Census, the Cherokee alphabet and a brief history of the Cherokee Indians by Bob Blankenship. Armuchee Ranger District published "Civil War Events at Dug Gap" and is doing a history of iron ore mining. Brasstown RD is working on a history of Lake Winfield Scott. Tom Hawks, district ranger, has written a brief History of Chatooga RD and is working on a history of Fern Springs. Chestatee RD is doing a history of De Soto Falls. Cohutta RD has transcribed from microfiche CCC articles from newspaper archives, and completed and displayed a Pictorial History of Logging Activities from the early 1920's to the 1940's. Tallulah RD completed a history of Warwoman Dell for a brochure. Oconee RD produced a Scull Shoals brochure. The National Forests in Alabama conducted 27 cultural resource surveys covering 16,000 acres during the past year, revealing 42 prehistoric sites. One site on the Tuskegee National Forest has carried out evaluations at two sites, in a mountain cave known as Wolf Creek Site and the other, Plum Grove site on the Nolichucky River.

The Daniel Boone National Forest reports that it helped set up a display of a pit saw, an early-day saw used to cut boards from a squared timber, at the second annual Kentucky Logging Show. The frame for the saw was built by the Frenchburg Job Corps. Also on the Daniel Boone, radiocarbon testing of eight prehistoric rockshelters revealed dates from 1358 B.C. to 172 A.D. Materials recovered include grass linings for storage pits, reed matting, fire pits, and cultigen seeds. Three other shelters were excavated after a land exchange, dating from 450 B.C. to 1040 A.D. Still in the Daniel Boone, consultations with the Advisory Council on Historic Properties and the Kentucky State Historic Preservation Officer resulted in proposed adaptive rehabilitation of one or more of the significant historic structures at the Redbird Ranger District headquarters site. Members of the Northeast Florida Anthropological society have begun excavation of an earthen burial mound on the Osceola National Forest under Sandra Jo Forney, Forest archeologist, with a volunteer agreement. District Ranger, Joe Wallace of the Francis Marion and Sumter National Forests assisted in writing the 120-page Informal History of Mountain Rest, South Carolina with the Mountain Rest Community Club. It covers the past 50 years. The three Forest archeologists located and analyzed over 400 prehistoric and historic sites in 22,000 acres. George Tolley, George Washington National Forest archeologist, worked with volunteers from the Potomac Academy in testing a structure from a 19th century tannery on the Lee District. On the Jefferson Forest, over 10,000 acres have been inventoried and more than 60 historic and prehistoric sites recorded. Evaluation was done on five sites, all possible nominees for the National Register. One historic iron furnace was declared a State landmark and is being nominated to the National Register. This is the Raven Cliff Furnace on the Mt. Rogers National Recreation

History Activities in the Field

Area. Catawba Furnace is being researched. On the National Forests in Texas, extensive evaluation of five prehistoric sites were conducted.

EASTERN REGION

A report was recently completed for the Ottawa National Forest, in Upper Michigan. It is entitled, "History and Cultural Resources: Logging, Mining and Pioneer Agriculture on the Ottawa National Forest, Michigan." It was compiled by Mid-American Research Center of Loyola University, Chicago.

The Ottawa National Forest has hired a forest archeologist, Becky Dinsmore.

Another report has been completed by Mid-American Research Center, for the Hiawatha National Forest, also in Upper Michigan. It is entitled, "Historical Records Study, Logging Industry and Pioneer Homesteading Cultural Resources on the Hiawatha National Forest, Michigan."

A new site has been added to the national Register of Historic Places. It is the Mondeaux Dam Recreation Area on the Chequamegon National Forest, Wisconsin. It is a Civilian Conservation Corps-constructed recreation complex.

ALASKA REGION

Twenty former Forest Service and Civilian Conservation Corps presonnel have been interviewed in 1983 and 1984 in an oral history program of the Forest Service in southeastern Alaska, James Caplan, history coordinator, reports. The interviews were conducted by Conner Sorensen, a part-time instructor in history at the University of Alaska, Juneau, under a volunteer agreement with the Forest Service. Autobiography of Vermont Forester

The Making of a Forester is a new book by Perry H. Merrill, an autobiography and a description of his 37 years as Vermont State Forester and Commissioner of Forest and Parks, 1929-66.

First Woman Forest Supervisor

A woman has been named a forest supervisor for the first time in the Forest Service. In January Geri Larson was promoted from deputy forest supervisor to supervisor of the Tahoe National Forest in California. She had been the first deputy forest supervisor in the Forest Service when she was appointed there in 1978. She has worked for the Forest Service for 23 years, first as a research forester, then in public affairs and land management planning.

Northwest Fire Lookout History

A compilation of 3,040 forest fire lookout stations in the four northwestern States with 585 old photographs and several hundred stories by old-timers features the book, Fire Lookouts of the Northwest by Ray Kresek, recently released. He has been gathering data for 30 years. For information on ordering copies, write to Historic Lookout Project, W. 123 Westview, Spokane, WA 99218.

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